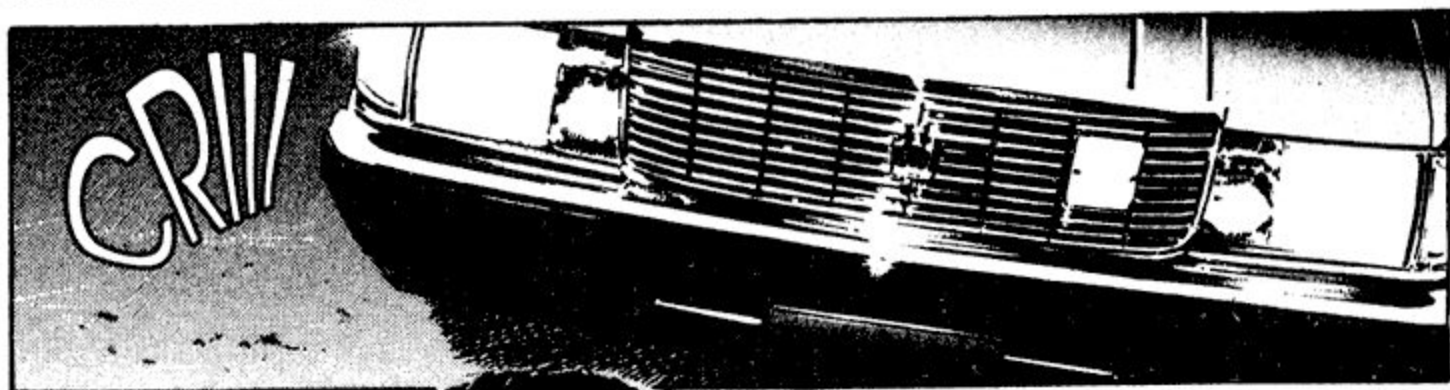
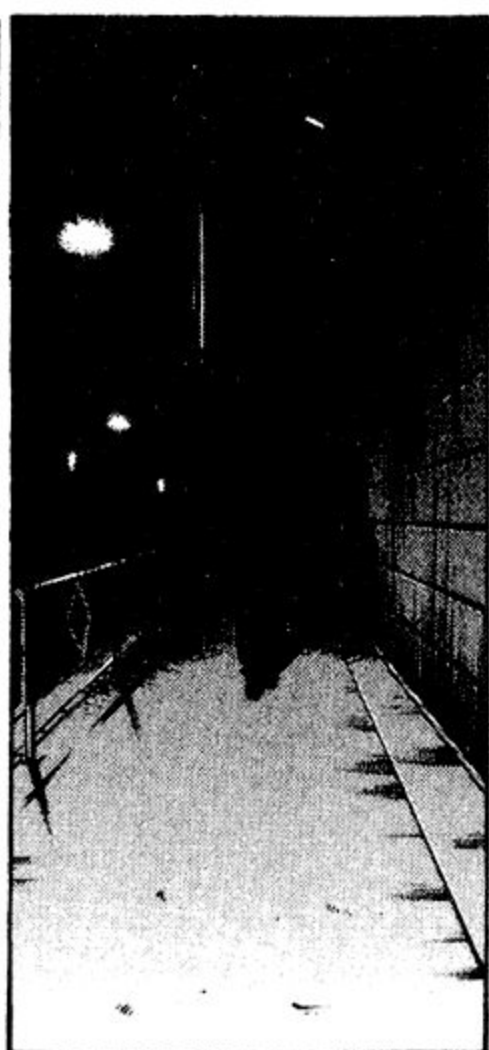
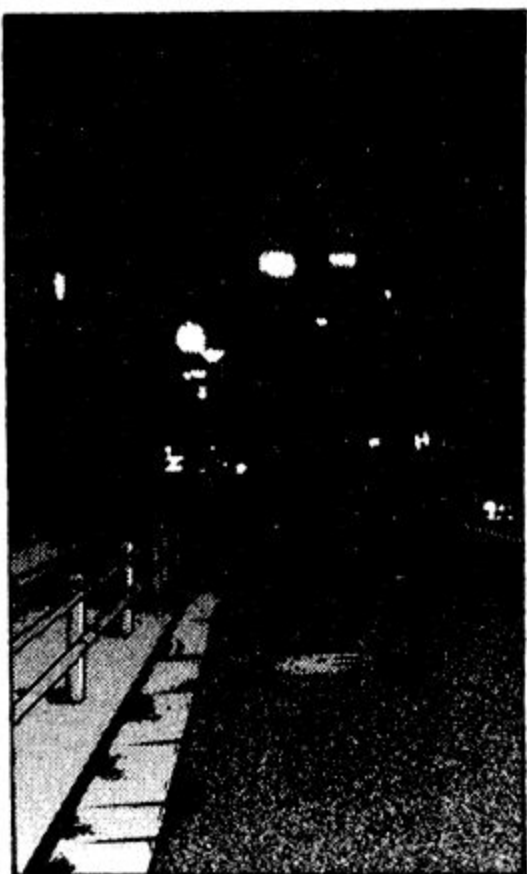


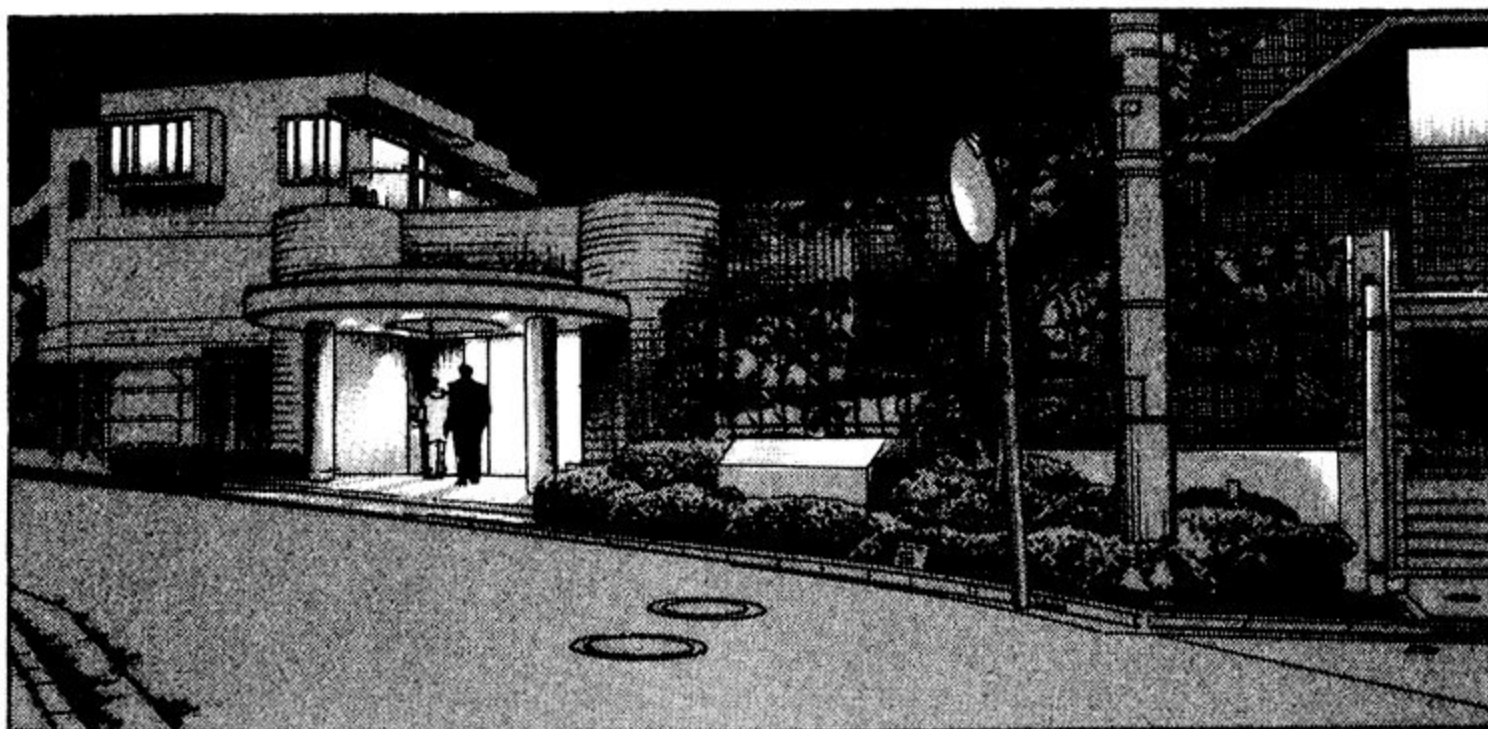


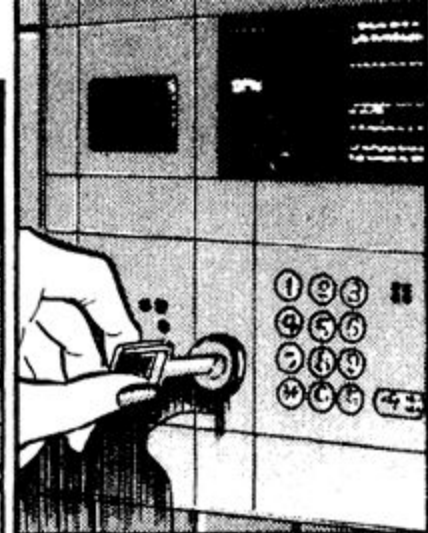


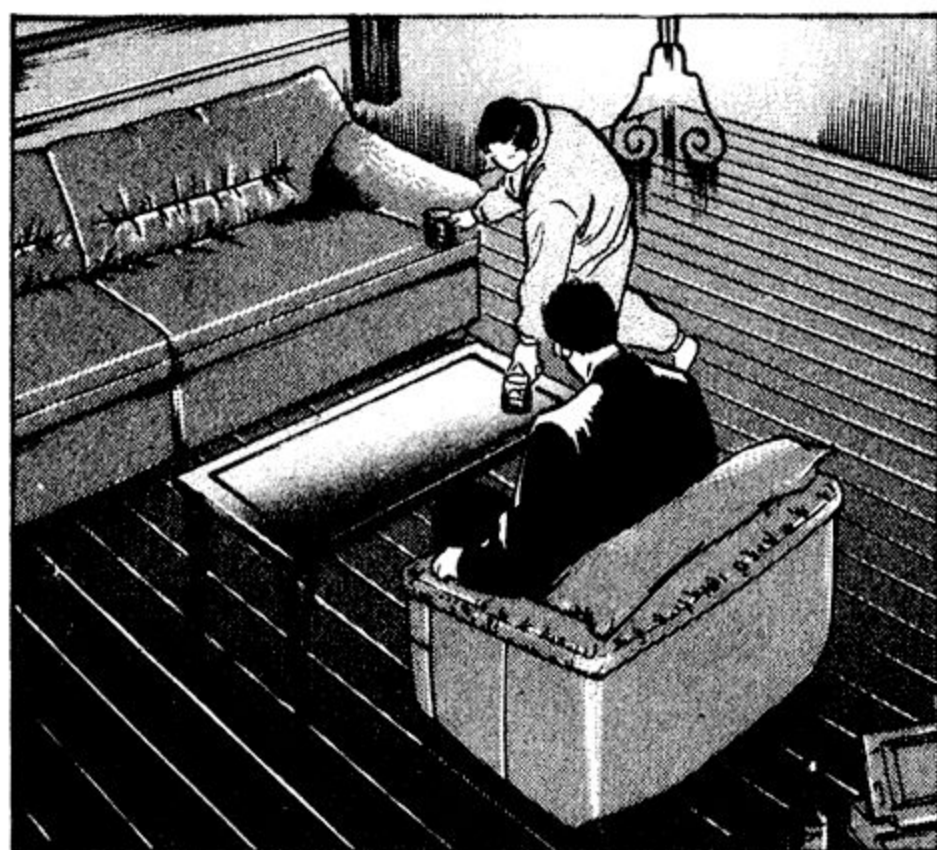
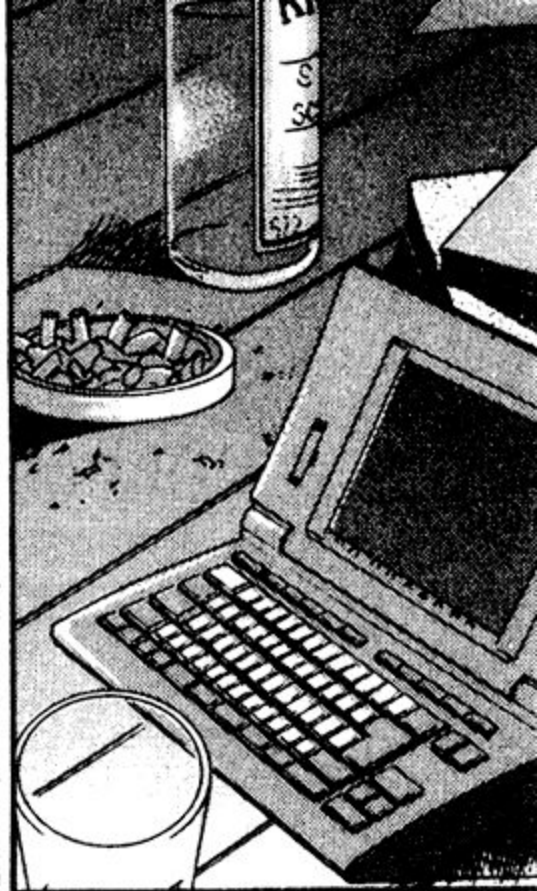
CHAPTER 49 : THE AGENT

















NOWADAYS,
READERS PREFER
BOOKS WRITTEN
BY BLOCK PRINT
FANATICS THAN
BY EXPRES-
SIONISTS.

THAT'S
TRUE, BUT
YOU SHOULD
KNOW THAT
I'M VERY
PROUD OF
THAT.



NO,
IT'S
JUST
...

...THAT
YOU SAID
YOURSELF
THAT YOUR
FIRST BOOK
ONLY SOLD
3000 CO-
PIES
...



THEN, ONE DAY,
A WEIRD AGENT
SHOWED UP SAYING
I WAS A REAL GENI-
US...



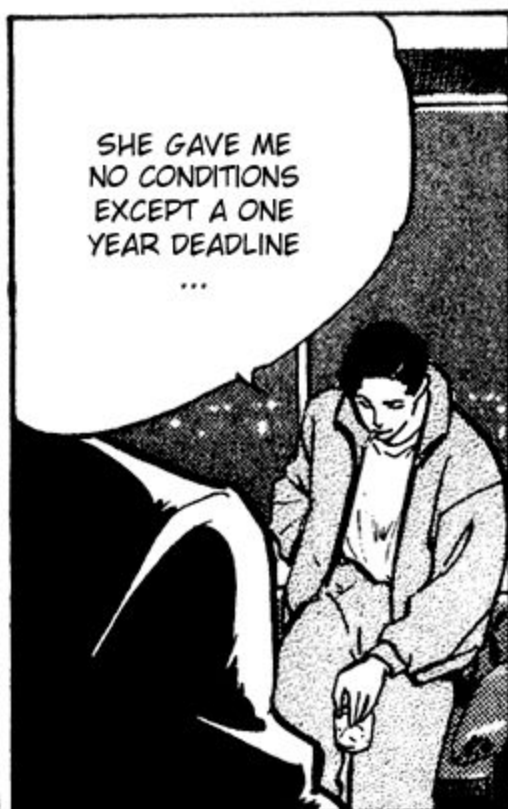
SHE
WANTED
TO SELL
MY NOVEL
IN ENGLISH
SPEAKING
COUNTRIES
...

AND SHE
PAID ME FIFTY
MILLION YEN UP
FRONT FOR THE
RIGHTS TO A NEW
NOVEL WITH A
HARDCOVER
EDITION.





THAT WAS
SIX MONTHS
AGO!

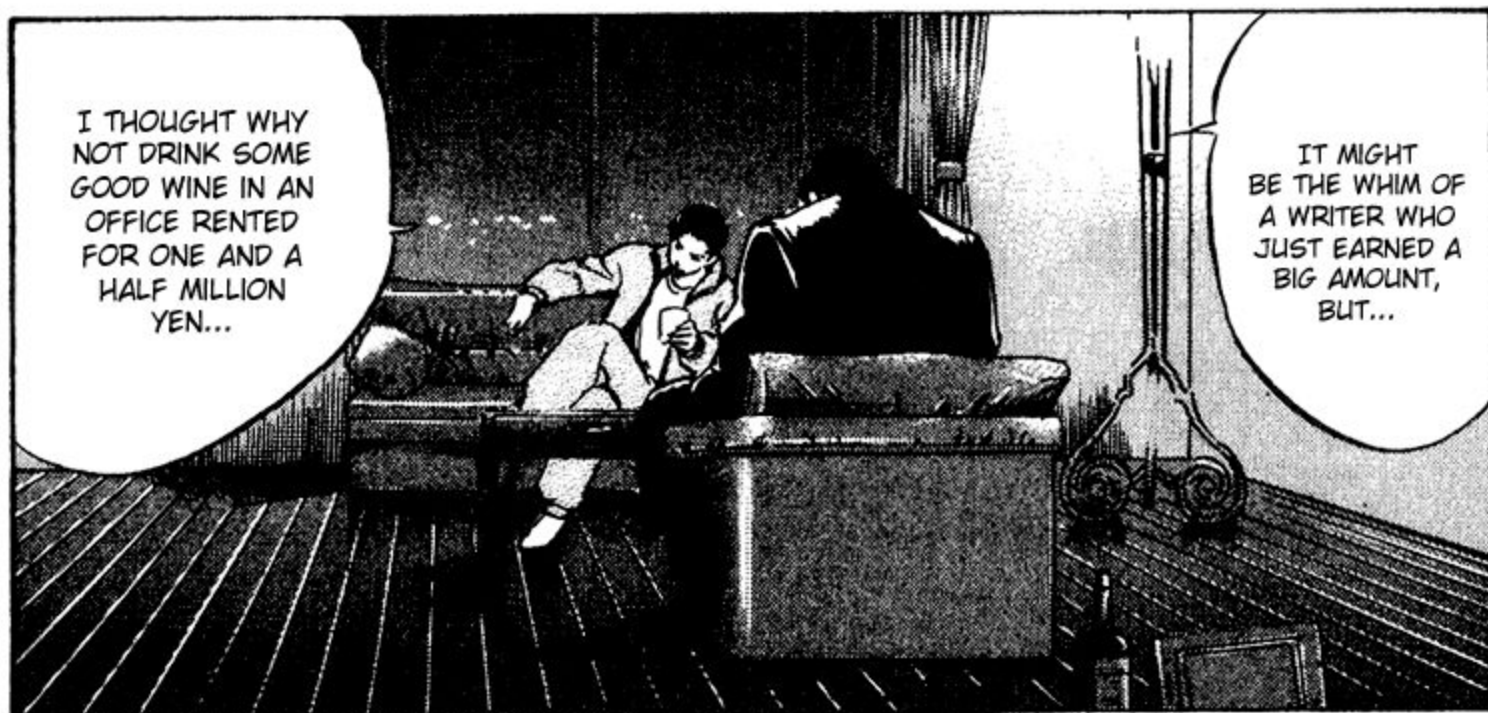


SHE GAVE ME
NO CONDITIONS
EXCEPT A ONE
YEAR DEADLINE
...



BUT
FOR ME
...

IN THE USA,
THOSE ENOR-
MOUS SUMS
ARE PRETTY
COMMON...



I THOUGHT WHY
NOT DRINK SOME
GOOD WINE IN AN
OFFICE RENTED
FOR ONE AND A
HALF MILLION
YEN...

IT MIGHT
BE THE WHIM OF
A WRITER WHO
JUST EARNED A
BIG AMOUNT,
BUT...





THAT AGENT MUST
HAVE BEEN SENT BY
DOJIMA...!?



THAT'S IMPOSSI-
BLE...



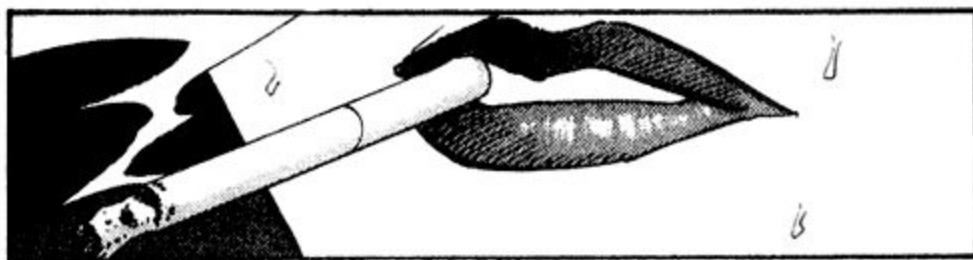
!!



TEN YEARS AGO,
HE DIDN'T HESITATE
TO SPEND THREE HUND-
RED MILLION YEN TO LOCK
ME UP... HAVEN'T YOU
NOTICED THAT HE'S AC-
TING THE SAME
WAY?



I'M A BIT
DISAPPOINTED
...



YOUR
TEACHER'S...
NO, YOUR
WRITER'S IN-
SIGHT DIDN'T
HELP YOU SEE
THROUGH HIS
GAME!?

IT'S TRUE
HE UNDER-
WENT PLASTIC
SURGERY,
BUT...



HE PLOTTED
EVERYTHING FROM
THE START! OUR
MEETING WAS SET
UP TO MAKE THE
GAME MORE IN-
TERESTING!



THAT MAN,
IT WAS HIM,
TAKAAKI
KAKINUMA!!



MY AGENT
...
WAS A
WOMAN
...

BUT
...





A RICH
AMERICAN
WOMAN OF
JAPANESE
ORIGIN...

I DIDN'T
ASK HER
ABOUT HER
AGE BE-
CAUSE SHE
WAS A
WOMAN...



YOU RECEIVED
A CALL FROM
HER, RIGHT?

LAST
NIGHT
...



INDEED,
SHE ASKED
ME HOW MY
WORK WAS
GOING...



BUT YOU
ONLY HAD TO
SEE HER TO
NOTICE THAT
SHE WAS AN
OLD WOMAN
...

IT WAS
TAKAAKI
KAKINUMA!!







IT'S
TRUE SHE
HAS A DEEP
VOICE FOR
A WOMAN
...

BUT SHE
TOLD ME
IT WAS BE-
CAUSE OF
A SURGICAL
OPERATION
ON A POLYP
IN HER
THROAT
...



TAKAAKI KAKINUMA
DISGUISED AS AN
OLD WOMAN...

